

Catawba County Emergency Medical Services

Fire Prevention Plan

Purpose

Our written fire plan is easy to administer and all employees must be confident and knowledgeable in the role they play in the event of an emergency situation.

OSHA standards require our organization to provide:

- Properly maintained, marked, illuminated exits
- Appropriate firefighting equipment
- Written emergency plans that provide safe emergency evacuation
- Employee training to prevent fire deaths and injuries in the workplace.

This plan has been developed and written in order to inform all employees of what to do in case of a fire or an evacuation of the building.

All employees shall be responsible for knowing the location of fire extinguishers, fire exits, evacuation plans, and safe rooms for both employees and visitors.

Throughout your work shift, please keep in mind those employees or visitors that may need special assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation.

➤ General Safety

- The following are accepted policies and procedures that must be followed by all employees to reduce the possibility of fire:
 - Company policy prohibits smoking, except in designated areas. These areas will be designated by the individual agency.
 - All equipment in the building will be properly maintained to prevent possible fires.
 - ❖ The equipment will also be routinely inspected to ensure no frayed cords or other potential safety hazards which could contribute to a fire.
 - ❖ Heat producing equipment such as hot water heaters, stoves, toaster ovens, etc., must be properly maintained and kept clean of accumulations of combustible materials.
 - ❖ Combustibles are not to be stored in close proximity to these pieces of heat producing equipment or in the hot water heater room.

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- Multiple electrical outlet devices must be plugged in UL-approved surge protectors with appropriate circuit breakers.
- Coffee makers must be turned off at the end of each working day.
- Birthday or special occasion cakes with lighted candles must be monitored at all times.
- Wastepaper products must be removed daily from all work areas.
- Flammable sprays, disinfectants, and other solutions must be stored in designated cabinets and areas.
- Aerosol cans become bombs if overheated, so keep away from heat and ignition sources.

➤ **Electrical Safety**

- Keep storage at least 36" from the front of any electrical panel (fuse box).
- The use of extension cords, gang-boxes, and "cheater plugs" are prohibited.
 - The use of these devices has been linked to fires in structures due to the overloading of circuits installed to handle much lower loads.
 - When absolutely necessary, the utilization of commercially available UL-approved surge protectors, which offer built-in circuit breakers to protect our equipment as well as to prevent the possibility of an accidental fire from the overloading of the electrical system, may be used.
- Inspect all cords for hazards before use. Any cord observed with a nick, scrape, or cut shall be immediately removed from use.

➤ **Fire Protection Equipment**

- Each base must have a full complement of the proper type of fire extinguisher for the fire hazards present.
- Extinguishers must be within at least 75' of each other.
- CCEMS bases are equipped with clearly identified ABC – All Purpose extinguishers throughout the building. The letters represent the type of fire they can extinguish:
 - A: Represents the typical garbage fire consisting of combustibles, i.e., paper, trash, and wood. Think of the "A" as representing a fire that will burn to an "ASH".

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- B: Represents the typical combustible liquid fire, i.e., consisting normally of alcohols, paint thinners, grease, oil, oil-based paint, and gasoline. Think of the “B” as representing a fire that will go “BOOM” or will “BLOW UP”.
- C: Represents the typical fire consisting of short-circuits and electrical sparks. Think of the “C” as representing a fire that starts with an electric “CURRENT”.

➤ Fire Extinguisher Inspection

- Only approved fire extinguishers are permitted to be used in workplaces, and they must be kept in good operating condition.
- Portable fire extinguishers must be inspected for cylinder integrity annually and hydrostatically tested every five or six years depending on type.
- All portable fire extinguishers are to be visually inspected each month in addition to the annual maintenance check.
 - Each extinguisher will have a tag displaying the last date of inspection and each inspection will be verified and validated on the tag.
 - You can inspect your ABC All-Purpose Fire Extinguishers by:
 - ❖ Lifting them off the mounting bracket and feel them for weight – they should be HEAVY.
 - ❖ Looking at the gauge – it should be in the “*green zone*”. If the unit is not appropriately charged, the extinguisher will not operate properly when activated.
 - ❖ Tightening the hose. If the hose is loose, it may come off in your hands when activated or the contents may spray wildly.
 - ❖ Looking in the hose. If the hose is obstructed by chewing gum or trash, the propellant will not be able to force extinguishing material out the hose effectively.
 - ❖ Ensuring that the pin is securely in place and has not been removed.

➤ Fighting Fire

- Never attempt to fight a fire larger than wastebasket size. Even a small fire can generate enough smoke to cause serious injury.
- Never attempt to fight a fire yourself. Call for help.
- Always stay between the fire and an exit when using an extinguisher to fight small fires, thus ensuring safe exit if necessary.

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- All employees are to be instructed on the hazards of fighting fire, how to properly operate the fire extinguishers available, and what procedures to follow in alerting others to the fire emergency.
 - The PASS method approved by the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) has been recommended and should be taught:
 - ❖ P = PULL the pin
 - ❖ A = Aim the hose
 - ❖ S = Squeeze the handle together to expel extinguisher's content
 - ❖ S = Sweep the hose back and forth through the base of the fire – NOT INTO THE UPPER PARTS OF THE FLAME!
- Always be sure the fire department inspects the fire site, even if you think you've extinguished the fire.
- In the event of a wastebasket or small trashcan, do not direct the stream into the can, as this may blow the flaming contents out onto the floor. Instead, start over the can and aim the stream into the backside of the can forcing the contents to stay inside.

➤ Building Evacuation

- If smoke or fire is discovered anywhere on County grounds or in facilities:
 - Pull the nearest fire alarm and call 911. Warn others.
 - Move away from the area as directed in the evacuation plan. Do not use elevators. Use stairways to leave the building. Do not attempt to retrieve valuables.
 - If you have a co-worker in your area that is hearing impaired, sight impaired, or mobility impaired, insure that person (s) is assisted from the building as necessary.
 - Refer to CCEMS SOG titled Building Evacuation for more detailed information.
- If evacuation becomes necessary, an acronym known as RACE can be used:
 - R: Rescue any employee, visitor, etc. in the immediate area of the fire.
 - A: Alarm all others in the area of the emergency and then call 911 or the local fire department.
 - C: Confine the fire and Contain the smoke by shutting doors and windows as you leave.

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- E: Escape or Extinguish. If at all possible and proper use of portable fire extinguishers is known, fight the fire using the PASS method described above. If the fire is too big or if you have not been trained, escape using the approved routes posted at each base.
 - If you are aware that someone is trapped in a burning structure:
 - Immediately inform the public safety personnel on the scene.
 - Do not re-enter the building.
 - If you are trapped, stay low to the floor as you try to exit. Do not open any doors that feel hot. Use wet towels or clothes to protect you from flames and smoke. If your clothes catch fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL!
 - All alarms should be taken seriously. If you hear an alarm, evacuate the building.
 - Know the locations of primary and secondary exit routes and the location of all fire extinguishers at your designated bases.
- Training
- Training will be performed initially upon assignment and annually thereafter to all employees of Catawba County EMS.

Remember – fire safety is everyone’s job!